

**MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST  
DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY FORM**

NR Eligible: yes ☒   
no ☐

Property Name: Cadillac Motel Inventory Number: PG: 85A-81  
Address: 16105 SW. Crain Highway Historic district: ☐ yes ☒ no  
City: Brandywine Zip Code: 20613 County: Prince Georges  
USGS Quadrangle(s): Brandywine  
Property Owner: Mani Patel and Madhu Patel Revoc Trust, et al Tax Account ID Number: 1141068  
Tax Map Parcel Number(s): 23 Tax Map Number: 164  
Project: US 301 Waldorf Area Transportation Improvements Agency: Maryland State Highway Administration  
Agency Prepared By: Parsons Brinckerhoff  
Preparer's Name: Renee S. Novak Date Prepared: 4/8/2008  
Documentation is presented in: 2008 Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties (MIHP) form  
Preparer's Eligibility Recommendation: ☐ Eligibility recommended ☒ Eligibility not recommended  
Criteria: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D Considerations: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G  
*Complete if the property is a contributing or non-contributing resource to a NR district/property:*  
Name of the District/Property: \_\_\_\_\_  
Inventory Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Eligible: ☐ yes Listed: ☐ yes  
Site visit by MHT Staff ☐ yes ☒ no Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Description of Property and Justification: *(Please attach map and photo)*

**Description:**

The Cadillac Motel is located on a 9.01-acre parcel along the west side of U.S. 301 in Prince George's County, Maryland. The motel comprises two individual wings positioned in an angular C-shaped footprint with their facades facing U.S. 301. The complex is oriented on an east-west axis and has a central courtyard area that now contains several benches, playground equipment, and one small tree. The property is bordered by a car lot to the north, U.S. 301 to the east, residential houses to the west, and a wooded area with open fields to the south. A one-story residential dwelling is located directly to the west and behind the motel. The motel is set on a level, open lot with a large grassy space in the front courtyard area.

Built in 1954, the one-story motel exhibits minor elements of the Colonial Revival style and has approximately 30 units. It reflects the typical wide C-shaped and crescent-shaped configurations popular in roadside motel architecture during the 1950s and 1960s. Exterior building features on both south and north wings include hipped roofs, brick construction of American Common bond, paired replacement windows of four-over-four double-hung sash, and decorative piers that support the cantilevered roof over the concrete walkway. Laundry rooms and mechanical spaces are of frame construction and are located behind each wing and out of

**MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST REVIEW**

Eligibility recommended ☒ Eligibility not recommended ☐

Criteria: ☒ A ☐ B ☒ C ☐ D Considerations: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G

MHT Comments: *Representative example of mid-century motel, associated with expansion of automobile travel*

*Jim T. Curran* ✓  
Reviewer, Office of Preservation Services

11/7/08  
Date

*B. Kinty*  
Reviewer, National Register Program

11/14/08  
Date

public view. The Cadillac Motel continues to operate as a motel facility under private family ownership.

**History:**

The land that the Cadillac Motel is located on was surveyed by D. H. Steffens in 1951 and encompasses nine and one one-hundredths (9.01) acres. The property occupies the southeast corner of a subdivision once referred to as "DeCesaris Park". In June of 1965, an agreement was made between Daniel M. and Rose Lecron of Baltimore and Eugene and Grace W. Chaney. For many years, the land and the motel were rented and sold between the Lecrons and the Chaney's. The Chaney's are also the same family who owned the nearby Waldorf Motel and Restaurant, which is located farther south along U.S. 301 at 2125 Crain Highway. Eventually, on April 28, 1978, Grace Walser Chaney, acting as sole devisee and executrix of the late Eugene Chaney's estate, conveyed an undivided one-half interest in the property to Manibhai R. and Maya Patel, and the remaining undivided one-half interest to Manibhai G. and Madhu M. Patel. On November 20, 2007, it appears that Manibhai and Madhu Patel gained full ownership of the property. For more information about the chain-of-title for the property, please refer to the 2008 Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties form.

The roadside motel evolved out of a necessity for leisure tourists traveling by automobile to have accessible overnight accommodations complete with food, gas, and entertainment services. In 1933, cabin-camp construction was considered to be one of the few booming building sectors of the Great Depression. These destination accommodations were increasingly referred to as auto camps, tourist courts, motor hotels, motor lodges, autels, and most commonly "motels".

Smaller, independently owned motels, also referred to as "mom-and-pop" management, dominated the motel industry in its early days. These "mom-and-pop" establishments were considered wholesome, family-oriented, and safe places to stay. Following a lull during World War II, the motel business soon boomed again by the late 1950s and into the 1960s, with motels no longer taking the form of individual cottage or auto camps but as fully integrated buildings under a single roof.

Specific building types and building arrangement within the motel complex help to determine how the modern-day, roadside motel evolved. Auto camps, cabin camps, and cottage courts with detached rooms gradually evolved into single integrated units underneath one roof. The spatial organization of the roadside motel took on many forms including motels laid out in one row or a series of rows, in the shape of a narrow U or wide U, and a crescent or cluster-shaped complex. The most common architectural styles included Colonial Revival, Spanish Colonial Revival, and Modern/Contemporary architectural styles. Many motel complexes boasted centrally located coffee shops, restaurants, pools, and recreational courtyard spaces as part of their integrated package. Competing motels often sought the benefits of brand recognition by displaying eye-catching neon signs to attract wayward travelers from the busy highway.

As commercial development greatly increased along the U.S. 301 corridor in the years following World War II, so did the roadside lodging business. As a result of the expansion of U.S. 301, new pathways opened between Baltimore and Virginia. Between 1949 and 1968, the casino and gaming industry flourished along the U.S. 301 corridor. In 1949, slot machines were legalized and could be found in almost any bar or restaurant along the strip of U.S. 301 known as "Little Vegas".

**Significance Evaluation:**

The Cadillac Motel is not eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. Although motels and motor courts are an important aspect of mid-twentieth century development within the U.S. 301 corridor in Prince George's and Charles Counties, the Cadillac Motel is a mundane example of motor court architecture along the corridor and within Maryland. Although the hotel is located along U.S. 301, research did not indicate that it was directly associated with the entertainment industry. Like many other motels

**MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST REVIEW**

Eligibility recommended \_\_\_\_\_

Eligibility not recommended \_\_\_\_\_

Criteria:   A     B     C     D   Considerations:   A     B     C     D     E     F     G  **MHT Comments:**\_\_\_\_\_  
Reviewer, Office of Preservation Services\_\_\_\_\_  
Date\_\_\_\_\_  
Reviewer, National Register Program\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

and motor courts of its era found on prominent travel corridors, it seems to have simply provided overnight accommodations to travelers. Therefore, it is not eligible under Criterion A.

Historic research, including deed research, indicates that the property has no known association with significant or important persons who have made specific contributions mid-twentieth century entertainment along U.S. 301, or whose activities are demonstrably important within a regional or national context. Therefore, it is not eligible under Criterion B.

The Cadillac Motel is not eligible under Criterion C. The motel complex has been recently altered with replacement windows throughout and modification of the prominent courtyard area. The motel, an unsophisticated derivative of Colonial Revival architecture, does not display design merit. Open spaces are not designed landscapes and feature no integral built components. The complex is not considered a rare example and does not embody distinctive characteristics or possess high architectural value. Therefore, it is not eligible under Criterion C for architectural significance.

The property was not evaluated for eligibility under Criterion D as part of this evaluation.

#### WORKS CONSULTED

Baeder, John. Gas, Food, and Lodging. A Postcard Odyssey, Through The Great American Roadside. New York, NY: Abbeville Press, 1982.

Brown, Jack D., et al. Charles County, Maryland: A History. La Plata, MD: Charles County Bicentennial Committee, 1976.

Enoch Pratt Free Library. Vertical Files. Baltimore, MD. 2008.

Jakle, John A., Keith A. Sculle and Jefferson S. Rogers. The Motel in America. Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press. 1996.

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Maryland Historical Trust. Standards and Guidelines for Architectural and Historical Investigations in Maryland. Crownsville, MD: Maryland Historical Trust, 2000.

Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA). Cultural Resources Overview, U.S. 301 South Corridor Transportation Study, Prince George's and Charles Counties, Maryland. Mechanicsburg, PA. September 1996. (Prepared by KCI Technologies).

Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA). Identification and Eligibility Report: MD 301 Transportation Study in Charles and Prince George's Counties, Maryland. 1999/2000 (Prepared by EHT Tracerics, Inc.).

Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA). U.S. 301 Southern Corridor Waldorf Bypass Cultural Resources Assessment and Cultural Resources Sensitivity Model for Charles and Prince George's Counties, Maryland. 2007 (Prepared by Parsons Brinckerhoff, Inc.).

National Park Service. National Register Bulletin: Defining Boundaries for National Register Properties. Washington, D.C.: United States Department of the Interior, 1997.

#### MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST REVIEW

Eligibility recommended \_\_\_\_\_

Eligibility not recommended \_\_\_\_\_

Criteria: \_\_\_A\_\_\_ \_\_\_B\_\_\_ \_\_\_C\_\_\_ \_\_\_D\_\_\_ Considerations: \_\_\_A\_\_\_ \_\_\_B\_\_\_ \_\_\_C\_\_\_ \_\_\_D\_\_\_ \_\_\_E\_\_\_ \_\_\_F\_\_\_ \_\_\_G\_\_\_

MHT Comments:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Reviewer, Office of Preservation Services

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Reviewer, National Register Program

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

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National Park Service. National Register Bulletin: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation. Washington, D.C.: United States Department of the Interior, 1990.

Southern Maryland Studies Center. Charles County Community College, Southern Maryland Studies Room. Vertical Files and Library. 2008.

**MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST REVIEW**

Eligibility recommended \_\_\_\_\_

Eligibility not recommended \_\_\_\_\_

Criteria: \_\_\_A \_\_\_B \_\_\_C \_\_\_D Considerations: \_\_\_A \_\_\_B \_\_\_C \_\_\_D \_\_\_E \_\_\_F \_\_\_G

MHT Comments:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Reviewer, Office of Preservation Services

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Reviewer, National Register Program

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**Cadillac Motel (PG: 85A-81)**  
**16105 Crain Highway, Brandywine**  
**1954**  
**Private**

Constructed in 1954, the Cadillac Motel is located along a busy portion of U.S. 301 (Crain Highway) in Prince George's County, north of the Charles County line. The motel is composed of a south wing and north wing forming a crescent-shaped configuration with a semi-circular parking lot area that faces east towards Crain Highway. The complex has a large, grassy space that includes a playground and stretches east towards U.S. 301. The motel has modest characteristics of the Colonial Revival style of architecture often found in motor courts, roadside lodging, and commercial establishments along prominent stretches of highway during the 1950s and 1960s. Both wings of the Cadillac Motel are two stories in height and are composed of brick masonry construction. At the rear of the complex, the wings occupy a linear footprint and angle slightly as they extend east towards U.S. 301. An asphalt-shingle, hipped roof covers both wings of the motel and extends out to cover a continuous concrete walkway. A curvilinear exterior wall on the north wing, decorative iron piers that support the roof canopy and its glass storefront office are among the most notable architectural features. The motel office, drive-through window, and carport are located on the south wing at the center of the complex. A paved driveway is located between the motel wings and leads to a lot where a one-story residential structure is located. Since the late 1970s, the Patel family has operated the motel, which continues to serve this purpose. The Cadillac Motel is not eligible for the National Register of Historic Places because it is a typical and mundane example of motor court architecture within the U.S. 301 corridor in Maryland and there are other better examples that more clearly convey this significance.



# Maryland Historical Trust

## Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. PG: 85A-81

### 1. Name of Property (indicate preferred name)

historic Cadillac Motel

other

### 2. Location

street and number 16105 SW Crain Highway not for publication

city, town Brandywine ☒ vicinity

county Prince George's

### 3. Owner of Property (give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name Mani Revoc Patel Trust, Et al. & Madhu Patel Revoc Trust

street and number 13525 Hunting Hill Way telephone

city, town North Potomac state Maryland zip code 20878-4836

### 4. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Prince George's County Courthouse liber 4919 folio 708

city, town Upper Marlboro tax map 164 tax parcel 23 tax ID number 1141068

### 5. Primary Location of Additional Data

- ☐ Contributing Resource in National Register District  
☐ Contributing Resource in Local Historic District  
☐ Determined Eligible for the National Register/Maryland Register  
☐ Determined Ineligible for the National Register/Maryland Register  
☐ Recorded by HABS/HAER  
☐ Historic Structure Report or Research Report at MHT  
☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

### 6. Classification

Category	Ownership	Current Function	Resource Count
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	Contributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce/trade	<input type="checkbox"/> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> site		<input type="checkbox"/> defense	<input type="checkbox"/> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> object		<input type="checkbox"/> domestic	<input type="checkbox"/> structures
		<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> objects
		<input type="checkbox"/> funerary	<input type="checkbox"/> Total
		<input type="checkbox"/> government	
		<input type="checkbox"/> health care	
		<input type="checkbox"/> industry	
		<input type="checkbox"/> recreation/culture	
		<input type="checkbox"/> religion	
		<input type="checkbox"/> social	
		<input type="checkbox"/> transportation	
		<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	
		<input type="checkbox"/> unknown	
		<input type="checkbox"/> vacant/not in use	
		<input type="checkbox"/> other:	
			Number of Contributing Resources previously listed in the Inventory
			0

## 7. Description

Inventory No. PG: 85A-81

### Condition

<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> altered

Prepare both a one paragraph summary and a comprehensive description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

### Architectural Description

The Cadillac Motel is located on a 9.0-acre parcel along the west side of U.S. 301 in Prince George's County, just north of the Charles County line in Maryland. The complex comprises two main sections, or wings, positioned in an angular C-shaped footprint facing U.S. 301. The motel is oriented on an east-west axis with the two wings extending around a central courtyard recreation area and towards U.S. 301. The property is bordered by a car lot to the north, U.S. 301 to the east, residential houses to the west, and a wooded area with open fields to the south. A one-story residential dwelling is located directly to the west and behind the motel. The motel is set on a level, open lot with a large grassy space in the front courtyard area.

The motel has approximately 30 individual units, and it reflects the typical, wide C-shaped and crescent-shaped configurations popular in roadside motel architecture during the 1950s and 1960s. The Maryland Department of Assessments and Taxation indicates that the motel was constructed in 1954. It continues to operate as a motel facility under private family ownership.

### EXTERIOR DESCRIPTION

The Cadillac Motel has two wings, the north wing and the south wing, and each wing has a section that is angled diagonally towards the front of the property and faces U.S. 301. The wings are one story in height with continuous, front-sloping hipped roofs that are covered with asphalt shingles. The motel is constructed of brick in the common bond pattern and has a concrete slab foundation. Each wing has approximately 30 bays that run in a straight line and turn outward near the center of the complex towards the courtyard. The façade is unadorned and exhibits minor elements of the Colonial Revival architectural style. Motel units contain one entranceway with adjacent pairs of replacement four-over-four double-hung sash windows. Window bays are complete with shutters and a row of brick stretcher sills. The main roof on the motel wings extends several feet over the façade to shield a concrete walkway below. The cantilevered eaves are supported by vertical decorative iron piers, and downspouts are incorporated into the piers from the roof above.

The south wing elevation has 13 rooms in the angled portion and four remaining rooms in the linear section where the office area is located. The motel office occupies the north corner of the wing and has a carport in the front area with an extended front-gable roof supported by several columns. The office space is small and has a full view of the carport area, courtyard, and U.S. 301. The space has full-height, fixed-sash storefront windows on the east façade that wrap around to the north elevation. Picture windows are set in panels with aluminum mullions. A drive-through window near the front entryway consists of a sliding glass window where customers can drive up to check in or check out of the motel without having to enter the office.

The drive-through window within the carport is two car widths wide. Behind the south wing is a row of frame service structures that are clad in vinyl siding and have gable roofs, except one unit with a hipped-roof section. They are adjoined to the main wing where the south wing turns at an angle. These structures appear to be supporting buildings where the motel laundry and mechanical facilities are located.

The north wing is separated from the south wing and office area by several parking spaces and an open driveway that leads to a residential dwelling behind the motel. The north wing occupies a similar footprint as the south wing; however, it contains 10 rooms in the angled portion, with an additional six rooms in the section that curves back towards the open lot and rear of the complex. The hipped roof and concrete walkway conform to the building's curved exterior. There are two smaller frame extensions that connect to the back of the north wing. These two structures have brick chimneys and front-gable roofs that are attached to the main roof. Similar to the adjoining structures on the south wing, these structures appear to be laundry and other service-related spaces.

During the field survey, the property owner did not permit access to the part of the parcel where the residential structure is located. Information on outbuildings and supporting structures was gathered from the public right-of-way and electronic aerial views. The house situated behind the motel is a one-story, brick Ranch-style dwelling with six bays. It has a front gable roof and a two-car

# Maryland Historical Trust

## Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. PG: 85A-81

Name Cadillac Motel  
**Continuation Sheet**

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garage. The house occupies an L-shaped footprint and is only accessible via a driveway that extends from the parking lot between the south and north motel wings.

The front courtyard space is an open grassy lot that contains six benches, playground equipment, a centrally-located deciduous tree, and shrubbery along the lot's periphery. From the electronic aerial views, contours in the topography indicate that at one time this large grassy lot may have contained a swimming pool. The original 1950s neon sign reads "Cadillac Motel" and is located in the easternmost section of the grassy courtyard and in proximity to U.S. 301. The sign displays two red segments with letters and a large neon arrow angled downward that points west towards the motel.



## 8. Significance

Inventory No. PG: 85A-81

Period	Areas of Significance	Check and justify below		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> health/medicine	<input type="checkbox"/> performing arts
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> invention	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-1999	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> entertainment/ recreation	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 2000-	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> ethnic heritage	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/ settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> social history
	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning		<input type="checkbox"/> maritime history	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation		<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other: _____

**Specific dates** 1950s **Architect/Builder** unknown

**Construction dates** 1954

Evaluation for:

☐ National Register ☐ Maryland Register ☒ not evaluated

Prepare a one-paragraph summary statement of significance addressing applicable criteria, followed by a narrative discussion of the history of the resource and its context. (For compliance projects, complete evaluation on a DOE Form – see manual.)

### History

The land that the Cadillac Motel is located on was surveyed by D. H. Steffens in 1951 and encompasses nine and one one-hundredths (9.01) acres. The property occupies the southeast corner of a subdivision once called "DeCesaris Park." In June 1965, I. Winston Mezger, of Mezger and Mezger Attorneys at Law in Baltimore, executed an agreement between Daniel M. and Rose Lecron of Baltimore and Eugene and Grace W. Chaney where the property would be sold to the Chaney and their heirs and assigns in fee simple. The Lecrons would then rent the land and motel from the Chaney with the knowledge that the property would belong to the Lecrons upon maturation of the mortgage. In a deed dated June 4, 1965, Eugene and Grace W. Chaney were named as Mortgagors, and Daniel M. and Rose Lecron were named as Mortgagees. The Chaney received an advance payment from the Lecrons of \$160,000 as part of the purchase price. The Lecrons would make monthly payments to the Chaney towards an outstanding deed of trust, costing \$35,099.

The Chaney family also owned the nearby Waldorf Motel and Restaurant during the 1950s and into the early 1980s. Upon the Lecrons' acquisition of the property at 16105 Crain Highway, they later conveyed it back to Eugene and Grace Chaney. The property included improvements such as heating, gas, plumbing apparatuses, and all motel and restaurant furniture and equipment. On April 28, 1978, Grace Walser Chaney Fuss (formerly known as Grace W. Chaney) conveyed an undivided one-half interest in the property to Manibhai R. and Maya Patel and the remaining undivided one-half interest to Manibhai G. and Madhu M. Patel. On November 20, 2007, it appears that Manibhai and Madhu Patel gained full ownership of the property.

The roadside motel evolved out of a necessity for leisure tourists traveling by automobile to have accessible overnight accommodations complete with food, gas, and entertainment services. The first popular form of remote lodging was the "cabin camp" or tourist camp that began in the western United States, which increasingly took hold because it was a much cheaper alternative to traditional hotels. With the construction of new highways and roads, automobile adventurers flocked to these popular destinations prior to World War I.<sup>1</sup> Although the Great Depression was very destructive to the hotel industry, the motel industry thrived because Americans continued to vacation by automobile with a need for less-expensive accommodations.<sup>2</sup> Cabin camps and their appealing convenience flourished into the Great Depression era. In 1933, cabin-camp construction was considered to be one of the few

<sup>1</sup> John A. Jakle, Keith A. Sculle, and Jefferson S. Rogers, *The Motel in America*, Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 32.

<sup>2</sup> Maryland State Highway Administration, 1999, *Identification and Eligibility Report: MD 301 Transportation Study in Charles and Prince George's Counties, Maryland*, (Prepared by EHT Tracerics, Inc.), 28.

# Maryland Historical Trust

## Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

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Name Cadillac Motel  
Continuation Sheet

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“booming” building sectors of the Great Depression.<sup>3</sup> These destination accommodations were increasingly referred to as auto camps, tourist courts, motor hotels, motor lodges, autels, and most commonly “motels.”<sup>4</sup>

Motels, like hotels, provided lodging for travelers; however, the motel was typically located along a highway instead of within an urban setting and provided the motorist with direct access to individual parking spaces. The number of roadside motels along America’s highways increased from 600 to more than 40,000 between the late 1920s and the 1950s.<sup>5</sup> Smaller, independently-owned motels, also referred to as “mom-and-pop” management, dominated the motel industry during this period. These “mom-and-pop” establishments were considered wholesome, family-oriented, and safe places to stay. Competition between motel operators helped raise the standards of the entire motel industry.

World War II caused a lull in motel construction and development due to gasoline rationing and a reduction in automobile and tourist travel as the nation focused on the war effort. The motel business soon boomed again by the late 1950s and into the 1960s, with motels no longer taking the form of individual cottage or auto camps but as fully integrated buildings under a single roof.<sup>6</sup> Motels benefited from the decentralization of cities and towns and the increasing suburbanization that came with automobile ownership. The federal interstate highway program, which began in 1956, was an important factor in decentralization and the widespread suburbanization process.<sup>7</sup>

Evolving motel morphology requires focusing on specific building types and building arrangement within the motel complex. Auto camps, cabin camps, and cottage courts with detached rooms gradually evolved into single integrated units underneath one roof. These integrated units embodied several different footprints that served practical and functional purposes. The spatial organization of the roadside motel took on many forms including motels laid out in one row or a series of rows, in the shape of a narrow U or wide U, and a crescent or cluster-shaped complex.<sup>8</sup> In all of these transitions, the main registration office comprised the central core of the integrated linear and curvilinear layout. Long porches enhanced the sense of visual integration and sheltered open windows during inclement weather.<sup>9</sup> Most commonly between the 1930s and mid 1950s, motel construction displayed elements of the Colonial Revival, Spanish Colonial Revival, and Modern/Contemporary architectural styles.

Motor courts began as single-story structures that were later altered or expanded. Many motel complexes boasted centrally located coffee shops, restaurants, pools, and recreational courtyard spaces as part of their integrated package. Soon, competing motels sought the benefits of brand recognition by displaying eye-catching neon signage next to the motel complex to attract wayward travelers from the busy highway. The later trend was towards “motor inns” in the late 1950s, which were substantially larger and most often made up of two- or three-story buildings organized around a central courtyard or pool area. Typical motor inns featured expanded public spaces indoors with the registration desk area expanded into a motel lobby with a gift shop and restrooms. These motor inns were the predecessors to multi-story, present-day highway hotels.

### “Little Vegas” and U.S. 301

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<sup>3</sup> Jakle, et al, 39.

<sup>4</sup> Maryland State Highway Administration, 1999, *Identification and Eligibility Report*, 26.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid, 28.

<sup>7</sup> Jakle, et al, 45.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid, 37.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid, 43.

# Maryland Historical Trust

## Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. PG: 85A-81

Name Cadillac Motel  
Continuation Sheet

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Commercial development greatly increased along the U.S. 301 corridor in the years following World War II. The boom in the Charles County roadside lodging business came when the U.S. 301 Potomac River Bridge was constructed in 1940. As a result of the expansion of U.S. 301, new pathways opened between Baltimore and Virginia. In the mid 1950s, traffic on U.S. 301 became so heavy that the road was dualized.<sup>10</sup> "Motels and restaurants sprang up to accommodate tourists, sportsmen and others who passed through or stopped in Charles County."<sup>11</sup> Motels and other tourist facilities came after the county successfully marketed the Charles County strip along U.S. 301 as offering the best business potential on the highway between Maine and Florida.<sup>12</sup> A 1955 article from the *Charles County Crossroad* offers some insight into what became known as the "Waldorf Extended" getaway:

"It happens that for the northbound motorist, 'Waldorf Extended' is a very convenient overnight stop, two nights out of Miami. The southern New Englander or the New Yorker also finds that it is time for his first night stop just as he reaches this area. The motels that have come to be the predominating figures on the roadside landscape are elegant indeed. They represent all degrees of excellence, from the not-so-excellent to the very-excellent. The best of them offer such city refinements as wall-to-wall carpeting, air conditioning, telephones in every room, tile baths and showers, decorator-furnished rooms, and ice cubes delivered to your room upon arrival. One of the newest has interior halls radiating from a central lobby. Guests are thus able to reach their rooms from both the inside and outside of the motel."<sup>13</sup>

Between 1949 and 1968, the casino and gaming industry flourished along the U.S. 301 corridor. Slot machines were a huge tourist attraction for motels and other businesses along this route. In 1949, slot machines were legalized and could be found in almost any bar or restaurant along the strip of U.S. 301 known as "Little Vegas."<sup>14</sup> This strip refers to a swath of highway along U.S. 301 located south of the intersection between U.S. 301 and MD Route 5 (Mattawoman-Beantown Road). Back in its heyday, this area once buzzed with nightlife, 24-hour diners, movie theaters, bright lights, live music shows, and famous performers.<sup>15</sup> In fact, Maryland had three times as many federally licensed gambling devices as Nevada.<sup>16</sup> Finally, in March 1963, after years of struggle and turmoil

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<sup>10</sup> *Maryland Independent*, "100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Issue," Author unknown, October 19, 1972, College of Southern Maryland, Southern Maryland Studies Room, p. A-9.

<sup>11</sup> Jack D. Brown, et al, *Charles County, Maryland: A History*, La Plata, MD: Charles County Bicentennial Committee, p. 66; Maryland State Highway Administration, 1999, *Identification and Eligibility Report*, 30.

<sup>12</sup> Robert G. Breen, "Location By Lady Luck," *Charles County Crossroad*, March 22, 1954, Enoch Pratt Free Library, Baltimore, MD.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

<sup>16</sup> Stephen Janie, "Little Vegas", *Chesapeake Life*, May/June 2007, Available online at [http://www.chesapeakelifemag.com/index.php/cl/features\\_article/fe\\_little\\_vegas\\_mj07/](http://www.chesapeakelifemag.com/index.php/cl/features_article/fe_little_vegas_mj07/) accessed March 2008.

# Maryland Historical Trust

## Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. PG: 85A-81

Name Cadillac Motel  
Continuation Sheet

Number 8 Page 3

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surrounding the presence of slot machines in Charles and Prince George's Counties, the state legislature voted to freeze new slots licenses and ultimately phase out all slot machines by July 1, 1968.<sup>17</sup> This action had a permanent negative impact on the motel and entertainment businesses along U.S. 301 and contributed to the demise of the motor courts and slot machine era.

### CHAIN OF TITLE

November 20, 2007	Manibhai R. Patel and Maya Patel to Mani. Patel Revoc Trust, et al. and Madhu Patel Revoc Trust <b>No Liber or Folio on file</b> <i>Prince George's County Land Records</i>
April 28, 1978	Grace Walser Chaney (sole devisee and executrix of the Estate of Eugene Chaney, deceased per Will Book GSMcG 15, page 180 Administration No. 22, 796) to Marubhai R. Patel and Maya Patel, his wife, & Marubhai G. Patel and Madhu Patel, his wife <b>Liber 4919, Folio 708</b> <i>Prince George's County Land Records</i>
June 4, 1965	Eugene Chaney and Grace W. Chaney, his wife, named as Mortgagors, to Daniel M. Lecron and Rose Lecron, his wife, named as Mortgagees. Upon fulfillment of the loan payment, the property would then be sold back to the Chaneys from the Lecrons <b>Liber 3161, Folio 144</b> <i>Prince George's County Land Records</i>

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<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

Inventory No. PG: 85A-81

See continuation sheet

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of surveyed property 9.01  
Acreage of historical setting 9.01  
Quadrangle name Brandywine

Quadrangle scale: 1:24,000

### Verbal boundary description and justification

#### BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The boundary is shown on the accompanying tax parcel map.

#### BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The property at 16105 Crain Highway has been historically associated with the parcel listed in the Prince George's County Land Records: Prince George's County Property Map 164, Parcel 3.

## 11. Form Prepared by

name/title	Renee S. Novak		
organization	Parsons Brinckerhoff	date	April 07, 2008
street & number	100 South Charles St., Tower One, 10 <sup>th</sup> Floor	telephone	410-727-5050
city or town	Baltimore	state	Maryland

The Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

return to:

Maryland Historical Trust  
Maryland Department of Planning  
100 Community Place  
Crownsville, MD 21032-2023  
410-514-7600



# Maryland Historical Trust

## Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. PG: 85A-81

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Name Cadillac Motel  
**Continuation Sheet**

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Southern Maryland Studies Center. Charles County Community College, Southern Maryland Studies Room. Vertical Files and Library. 2008.

Conversation with Les and Marie Roberts, owners of the Waldorf Motel. March 2008.

# Prince George's County Tax Map

0 500 Feet 1:6,000

Cadillac Motel (PG: 85A-81)  
16105 Crain Highway  
Brandywine, MD 20613  
USGS Piscataway Quad

## Cadillac Motel



0 1,000 Feet

1:24,000





PG: 85A-81

Cadillac Motel

Prince George's County, Maryland

Renee S. Novak

March 19, 2008

MD SHPO

View of the motel and north wing, looking  
Southwest

# 1 of 5



PG: 85A-81

Cadillac Motel

Prince George's County, Maryland

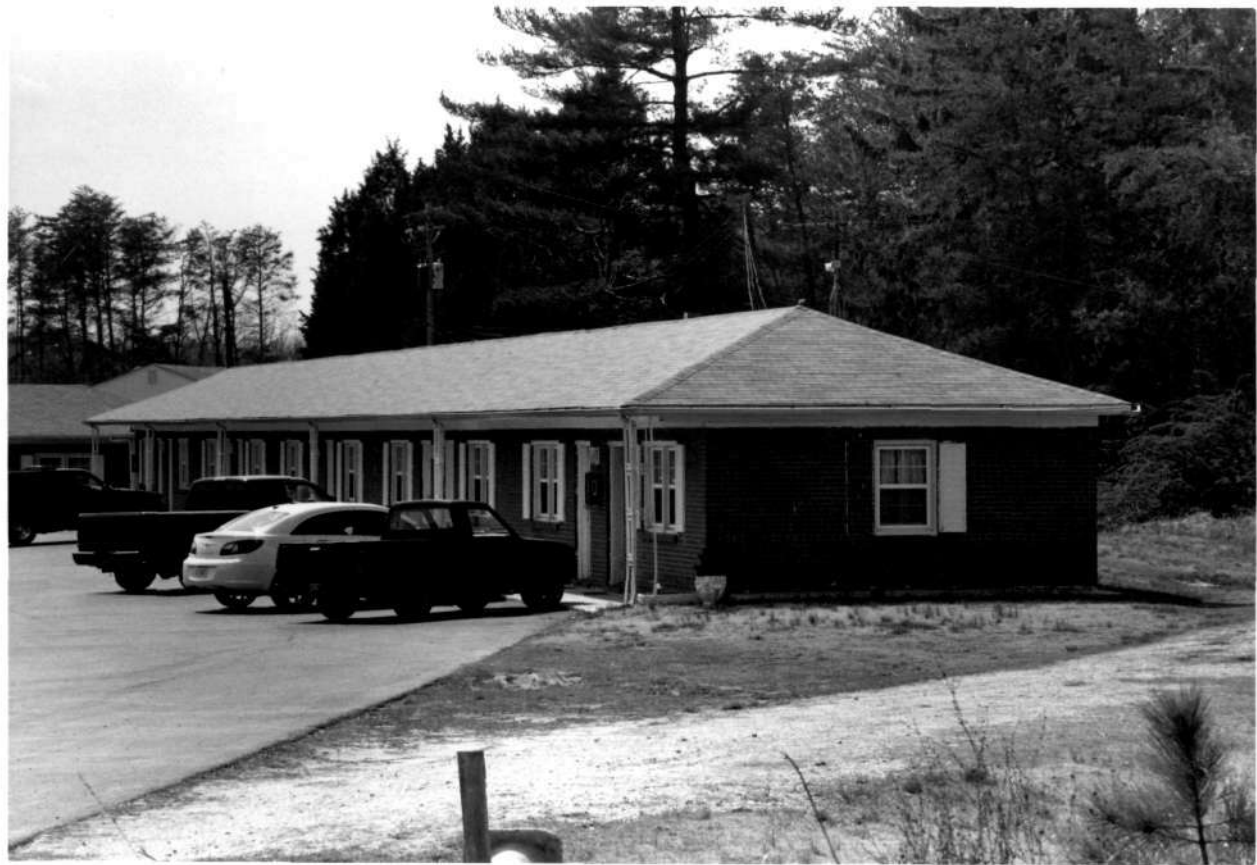
Renee S. Novak

March 19, 2008

MD SHPO

View of motel office and carport, and view  
of central green space (foreground)

# 2 of 5



PG: 85A-81

Cadillac Motel

Prince George's County, Maryland

Renee S. Novak

March 19, 2008

MD SHPO

Close-up view of the north wing, looking  
west

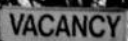
# 3 of 5





CADILLAC  
MOTEL

A large, dark, rectangular sign with the words "CADILLAC" and "MOTEL" in white, bold, sans-serif capital letters. To the right of the text is a large, stylized arrow pointing to the right, also in a light color. The sign is mounted on a dark pole.



VACANCY

A small, rectangular sign with the word "VACANCY" in white, bold, sans-serif capital letters. It is mounted on a dark pole below the main sign.

PG: 85A-81

Cadillac Motel

Prince George's County, Maryland

Renee S. Novak

March 19, 2008

MD SHPO

original 1950s neon sign

# 4 of 5



PG: 85A-81

Cadillac Motel

Prince Georges County, Maryland

Renée S. Novak

March 19, 2008

MD SHPO

original 1950s neon sign

#5 of 5